

And in two cases where Brethren have moved away from us congregations have been gathered. While Brethren ought not to isolate themselves from the church unless a sufficient number goes together to start another church, yet members ought to be faithful to their beliefs. And churches and pastors can help them by looking after them.

Waterloo, Iowa.

THE GRIP OF TRUTH

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I intend this article as a tonic. We want to hold the truth with ineradicable grip. We want to strike so hard for God that it will react and while we take the sword the sword will take us. You notice that the officers of the northern army every year assemble, and you notice that the officers of the southern army every year assemble. Soldiers coming together are very apt to recount their experiences and to show their scars. Here is a soldier who pulls up his sleeve and says, "There, I was wounded in that arm," and shows the scar. And another soldier pulls down his collar and says, "There, I was wounded on the neck." And another soldier says, "I have had no use of that limb since the gunshot fracture." O, my friends when the battle of life is over and the resurrection has come and our bodies rise from the dead, will we have on us any scars showing our bravery for God? Christ will be there all covered with scars. Scars on the brow, scars on the hands, scars on the feet, scars all over the heart won in the battle of redemption. And all heaven will sob aloud with emotion as they look at those scars. Ignatius will be there, and he will point to the place where the tooth and paw of the lion seized him in the Coliseum. And John Huss will be there and he will show where the coal first scorched the foot on that day when his spirit took wing of flame from Constance. M'Millan and Campbell and Freeman, American missionaries in India will be there—the men who with their wives and children went down in the awful massacre at Cawnpur, and they will show where the daggers of the Sepoys struck them. The Waldenses will be there and they will show where their bones were broken on that day when the Piedmontese soldiery pitched them over the rocks. And there will be those there who took care of the sick and who looked after the poor, and they will have evidence of earthly exhaustion. And Christ with his scarred hand waving over the scarred multitude will say, "You suffered with me on earth, now be glorified with me in heaven." And then the great organs of eternity will take up the chant and St. John will play, "These are they who came out of great tribulation and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." But what will your chagrin and mine be if it shall be told that day on the streets of heaven that on earth we shrank back from all toil and sacrifice and hardship? No scars to show the heavenly soldiery. Not so much

as one ridge on the palm of the hand to show that just once in all this battle for God and the truth we grasped the sword so firmly and struck so hard that the sword and the hand stuck together and the hand clave to the sword. Oh, my Lord Jesus, rouse us to thy service.

Thy saints in all this glorious war
Shall conquer tho they die.
They see the triumphs from afar
And seize it with the eye.

When that illustrious day shall rise
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory thru the skies,
The glory shall be thine.

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PASTORAL VISITING

Paper read before the Indiana State Conference at Roann by John M. Fox, Cambria, Ind.

Every pastor must feel that at the best he has fallen short of his ideal of ministerial intercourse with his people both in quantity and in quality.

The most diligent and devoted will welcome a statement of the subject.

The following thoughts have in view such pastors as confessedly fail much in this regard and still more those who consider their duty as confined to the study, the pulpit, and perhaps also to public occasions and movements outside of the congregation.

It is not an uncommon expression to hear, "He is strong in the pulpit but does not visit his people." It is sometimes so understood that he shall not be expected to visit.

The common excuse is that he comes in on Saturday train and goes out on Monday. Therefore he has no time to visit, and the congregation is not the loser if pastoral visiting refers to time spent in mere social talk. But a thousand fold less can he afford the loss to himself and others that comes from true and faithful pastoral visiting whatever may be the position of his labors.

Pastoral visiting is implied in pastorship. The word pastor means shepherd and the good shepherd knows and cares for his sheep individually. Christ said, "I am the good Shepherd and know my sheep and am known of mine." His ministry was with individuals mostly.

It is not enough to call one a pastor that shakes hands with the people after service and calls most of them by name. But he should come in close relation with them.

The visiting pastor is able to suit his preaching to the wants and needs of his flock much better when he is fully acquainted with them individually. It saves him from the great mistake that his work is chiefly only to orate before a miscellaneous crowd that might as well be made up of effigies—that is he is simply to develop a truth as if its end were its self instead of using it as an instrument for a specific purpose that takes into view the condition of living persons as he knows them.

By pastoral visiting the pastor not only comes to know his people as they are, but he gets good thoughts for his sermons that cannot be gotten from any other source. A vis-

it to the humble parishioners may open up a fresh point of view as a field of discourse. The people should be an important part of his library.

While he adopts his preaching to classes he cannot thoroughly adopt his council or comfort to individuals except in personal intercourse.

Every person differs from another in some feature of mind as well as countenance.

If the congregation numbers one hundred the same number of sermonical arrows shot in a whole year might miss one half of the hearers.

In the congregation the people are talking to themselves in ways unknown to the pastor until he is thrown into private conversation with them. Beyond this there is the power of personal presence eye to eye, soul to soul; while in the congregation the people are a mass to the speaker and he is to them a sort of a speaking machine whether he is in earnest or not.

Public speech has a power peculiar to itself, and hearing has a sensibility to appeal felt by each listener. But there is also a power in personal conversation.

Private solicitation to an immediate consecration is often necessary. By common consent the leading of persons directly to the feet of Christ is the main duty of the minister. How can he perform this duty without private work!

An earnest preacher of twenty years' experience often exhorting to immediate consecration testified that to his knowledge only once was a man converted by and during the sermon. While on the other hand numbers had been received by personal conversation. Undoubtedly without personal work quite a number who are fully consecrated to God would remain out of the church and strangers to grace.

From these great objects of pastoral visiting there are many uses of importance.

To know more intimately the ability of each individual that you can have a work for all to do according to their talent.

Every pastor knows something of the envying and jealousies that exist in every congregation and especially the injured feelings from real or imagined neglect on the part of others. All this cannot be preached away. It needs general visiting, private explanation and suggestion to those who offend. Otherwise the root of bitterness grows. Pastoral visiting will establish friendship between pastor and people. This alone is weighty in any church.

Further, it gives him more influence in the pulpit by being personally acquainted and tends to make up for his weakness which I suppose we all feel. It need not be said except to fill out this statement that this work greatly adds to church attendance: If the pastor is my visitor and personal friend will he not miss me in the public service?

It is a sacred recreation. No minister can to his real and lasting good spend more than the forenoons in his study. He needs fresh air and exercise, and where can he get